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# EXTENSION SERVICE *Review*

MARCH 1959

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Management On the Farm  
and in the Home





Official monthly publication of  
Cooperative Extension Service:  
U. S. Department of Agriculture  
and State Land-Grant Colleges  
and Universities cooperating.

*The Extension Service Review is for Extension educators—in County, State and Federal Extension agencies—who work directly or indirectly to help people learn how to use the newest findings in agriculture and home economics research to bring about a more abundant life for themselves and their community.*

*The Review offers the Extension worker, in his role of educational leader, professional guideposts, new routes, and tools for speedier, more successful endeavor. Through this exchange of methods, tried and found successful by Extension agents, the Review serves as a source of ideas and useful information on how to reach people and thus help them utilize more fully their own resources, to farm more efficiently, and to make the home and community a better place to live.*

Vol. 30

March 1959

No. 3

Prepared in  
Division of Information Programs  
Federal Extension Service, USDA  
Washington 25, D.C.

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## EAR TO THE GROUND

The more I read and hear about farm living today, the more I'm convinced of the importance of good management. And after a recent visit to Mississippi and Alabama, I'm even more sure that good management will spell the difference between success and failure on many farms.

I talked with farmers in several counties and, as expected, they had a wide variety of problems. Many have nice homes, good land and equipment, and enjoy a good living.

But I also visited some with gross incomes of less than \$2,000. They are perhaps typical of that large group of low-income farmers we hear about—the 56 percent who produce less than 10 percent of our farm output.

These folks appear to want information on good practices, but then fail to apply it. One, for example, asked the agent about recommended corn varieties. Then he said he planned to plant corn the next day. The agent cautioned that there was still a chance of frost and suggested he wait. "No," the farmer said, "I'm ready to plant and will take a chance on frost. If I lose it, I'll plant again in April."

As we walked over his farm, it be-

came obvious that he carried on all of his enterprises in a similar manner. He was farming strictly by guess.

The next day I visited another farm in direct contrast. A young family with about the same size farm is doing a good management job and making almost amazing progress. Starting from scratch in 1954, they've built up a grade A dairy, have good buildings and equipment, and are ahead on their mortgage payments.

What are the differences between the two? Management, for one thing. The first farmer doesn't plan ahead more than a few days at a time and then doesn't base his decisions on available information. The second, on the other hand, has a long range plan, knows where he's going, and how he's going to get there. And he'll get there, too.

That's what this issue is about—management on the farm and in the home. Some articles tell about management needs of various groups served by Extension; other articles tell how these needs are being met. We hope they will give you some ideas on how to help people use their resources wisely to achieve goals of better family living.—EHR.

The Extension Service Review is published monthly by direction of the Secretary of Agriculture as administrative information required for the proper transaction of the public business. Use of funds for printing this publication approved by the Director of the Bureau of the Budget (June 26, 1958).

The Review is issued free by law to workers engaged in extension activities. Others may obtain copies from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., at 15 cents per copy or by subscription at \$1.50 a year, domestic, and \$2.25, foreign.



## DECISIONS UNLIMITED ...through better Management

by J. B. CLaar, Federal Extension Service

**E**XTENSION workers today are change oriented. There is an awareness sweeping the country that keeping programs adjusted to the modern day is a need that must be met.

Extension is determined in these changing times not to play the part of a gigantic ostrich with its head in the sand, or the part of the humming bird that flutters about without ever quite coming to rest. Instead, our aim is to emulate the proverbial wise old owl that, after carefully analyzing the situation, moves straight to its objective.

Through the study of the Scope Report this needed analysis is occurring. From this analysis and their close contact with people, extension workers today recognize more than ever the importance of good management in the business and family living aspects of the people they serve.

What do we mean by management? At a moment's reflection one can recall many families that are working hard but do not seem to be achieving the things that they want because of poor business management or the failure to make wise use of their resources in consumption.

Good management is using available resources in such a way that all possible ends are accomplished. Good management is a result of a series of correct decisions—so the essence of management is decision making. As such it is a universal problem occurring in our lives and in our businesses. The necessity for good management promises to be even greater in the years ahead.

### Particular Farm Problems

Farm families have special management problems. As the size and specialization of farm businesses increase, requiring more input of capital and labor, each business decision becomes of more significance and is more difficult to reverse.

The vast output of products from science and industry offers the buyer a dozen different ways to do the same job. This increases the complexity of the decision making job. When this trend is coupled with the trend to buying many goods and services rather than producing them, the number of decisions that individuals must make mushrooms.

Successful farming today requires

far more than merely collecting good practices from experiments and the farms of others. Practices cannot be chosen in isolation but must be carefully selected to form systems of production and marketing. These systems in turn must fit in with the type and size of enterprises, and with available capital, labor, family living considerations, etc.

Increased levels of living, the cash economy, and the greater capital requirements referred to above have all resulted in the increased importance of financial management and planning for the family.

How money is used is fully as important in achieving family goals as the amount earned. Increasingly, farmers and their wives have been seeking off-farm employment. This is not only a complex decision in itself, but one which gives rise to many more management problems—such as how to maintain a normal home for the youngsters.

To add to the complexity of decision making, business decisions must frequently be made in the light of family ends since the business exists in order to achieve them. The goal of the family is to use its resources of time, energy, and money to pro-

(See *Decisions Unlimited*, page 71)



# Management—A Box Full of Tools

by GLEN PULVER and LOUISE YOUNG, *Farm Management and Home Management Specialists, Wisconsin*

NEVER has the maze of what to do with limited time and money been so complex for a family. Farm families face a world characterized by rapid technological advances, expanded capital requirements, complicated market transactions, wider choice in consumer goods, increased pressure on time and money, and a narrow price-cost structure.

Today, when success or failure may hinge on a dollar spent in the right place or a job done at the right time, management know-how is at a premium. The farm family, to be successful, must rely on good decision-making ability as never before.

The strength of tomorrow's agricultural life will depend largely upon the success of Extension's effort in equipping farm families with a box full of the management tools necessary to face the many decisions. It is not enough to serve only as a source of information when the family is faced with a new or unfamiliar problem. Neither is it enough to provide a management service to which they can turn at each new technological change.

Unless farm families know how to apply the new information to their own situations, they will soon be buried under a mass of inadequate decisions. And Extension will be confronted with more and more requests for answers to specific problems. Extension workers must gear themselves to a program with management as its core.

The crucial first step in a management education program is developing within family members an attitude of questioning, constructive self-criticism and analysis. Before good management becomes a part of their lives, they must be willing to accept the fact that there are usually many ways they can improve farm and family affairs.

Orientation toward decision-making can perhaps best be taught by use of the whole farm and home approach. Extension workers can initiate this in one of two ways:

- Help families to take a look at what they want out of life in terms of short and long-run satisfactions and material goals. The inadequacy of present operations may shock them into action.

- Help families to make objective appraisals of present resources and resource productivity. Then the family has a true picture of its position in relation to the society around it. This appraisal may include a detailed analysis of production levels, farm and family accounts, indebtedness, and other family information.

More Wisconsin agents are using the latter approach in their management-oriented programs. Either approach, to be successful, must soon be followed by the other.

## *Right Information*

Wise decision-making depends on good, sound information. The family must not only be taught reliable sources of information, but also how to collect applicable information in the best form for making decisions.

Extension must continue to serve as an important source of information for farm families. And all extension workers have a responsibility for developing materials in a form which can be readily used in good decision-making.

Many farm families still are not aware of all the off-farm resources available to them, especially Soil Conservation Service, Farmers Home Administration, and other agencies. These are valuable sources of information and technical assistance which farm families should utilize.

## *From the Tool Box*

The most important single management tool which the farm family must learn to use is the *consideration of alternatives* when making decisions. Family members should learn to analyze alternative solutions and their probable results. This should be done not only when making decisions within a specific farm enterprise or

family activity, but should include how any such course of action will influence the entire farm and family. Use of this tool should become automatic since it is the farm family's best protection against hasty, inadequate decision-making.

In order to compare alternatives, the farm family must learn how to use other tools of analysis. Partial budgeting techniques which weigh costs and returns of two or more alternatives are useful in considering economical questions. Adoption of new equipment, fertilizer, or a heating system are examples of alternatives which can be appraised with this tool.

When considering major changes in farm organization or family financing, whole-farm budgets projected into the future become a useful means of appraising the effects of such change to the entire farm and family financial picture.

Because of the close relationship between the farm business and the home financial structure there is great need for a tool which can correlate anticipated income and expenses in the year ahead. This can be accomplished by the use of money planning guides or balance sheets which involve the entire family in financial planning to achieve their goals.

Family security is of great concern to everyone. There are a multitude of insurance protection systems, Social Security, and investment opportunities. Extension workers can teach farm families a system of family security planning to be used as situations change in the future.

A system of good farm and family records is a valuable tool in facing a future filled with changes. Records of important papers and their location, inventories of all resources, farm production records, and financial accounts are all a part of this system of recordkeeping.

Another tool in this box is work simplification. As demands on time increase, the family must learn to organize work and play for maximum utilization and satisfaction.

These are only a few of the analytical tools which extension workers need to provide farm families. Others include enterprise analysis, family

(See Box of Tools, page 64)



# Stepping Up Management Skills

by CRYSTOL TENBORG, *Home Management Specialist, Arkansas*

USE what you have to get as much as possible of what you want. Then you're practicing management.

All of us practice management to some extent, but management education helps people to become better managers. This, in turn, gives greater satisfaction and raises the level of the individual and the general public. More efficient production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services will result.

In today's complex society, good management is the only means we have of combating pressures from many sources. Carefully thought-out plans, carried out with conviction, will help us to go in the direction we wish to go. Good management is the major deterrent to "impulse action" which can lead us in the wrong direction.

## *Preparing for Change*

Many families may obtain a better living without increased income. This may be done by adjusting the use of the resources which they have and by increasing their knowledge and skill to make the resources of time, energy, and money more interchangeable. Attitude is an important factor relative to these adjustments. Habits help us to do many things without conscious effort, but they can be detrimental if they prevent adjustment to change.

The first step in the management process is analysis of resources. This means taking into account all of the family resources—the time of all family members available to help, the energy various family members are able to expend, and the money and other material resources available.

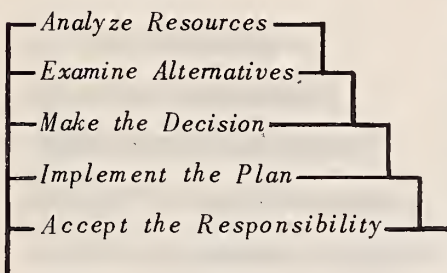
The second step is setting up alternatives. The family must not be

satisfied to set up alternatives based on present knowledge alone. They need to investigate and find out what possibilities there are over and above those known at a given time. Change may have brought new products or new processes to improve the situation.

The third step is to select the best of the alternatives available under the circumstances—make the decision. The next step is to implement the plan and the fifth is to assume responsibility for the decision.

Just as change is normal, risk is inherent. The farther into the future we project, the less certain we can be of circumstances. Risk is involved in all decisions. Since only persons whose resources are involved can assume the risk, only those persons should make the decision.

The last step is evaluation which actually leads back to reobservation. Management is a continuing process with a time span of various lengths between periods.



Somewhere along the way the family will need to establish both long and short-time goals. These should, if possible, be established after resources have been analyzed. Goals may need to be altered during the process. If they are too low, there is little incentive to try and make improvements. Too high goals may

be discouraging over a long period of time.

The goals chosen by a family reflect the values which they consider important. Since different people will have different values, no two families will have exactly the same goals.

Dr. Dorothy Dickins of Mississippi State University did a study that included Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana farm families. She found that good management paid off in higher net incomes, great increases in net worth, more adequate diets, better dressed family members at little difference in cost, and more livable homes.

## *Management in Action*

The accomplishments of a Randolph County family show the value of applying management principles. When they began in Farm and Home Development in 1956, they were renting a 215-acre farm. The first year they rented 100 more acres and a year later were operating 450 acres of rented land.

In 1957, the family purchased 267 acres and established an irrigation well. This year they started operating their farm plus 215 acres of rented land.

## *Record Work*

Accurate farm and home records have been the base for the family's management decisions. An example is their decision to switch the enterprise from cotton and soybeans to swine.

Their farm was well adapted to grain production. After considering various alternatives, the family decided to build a central farrowing house. Then they planned a good pasture system, following extension recommendations. Labor income has shown a substantial increase in the past 3 years.

Now the family is looking forward to another important goal. Floor plans have been completed for a new home which they expect to build in the near future.

Farm and home records, budgeting for home needs, and other management tools helped this family attain a better living. They illustrate what can be accomplished through wise management decisions.

# Teaching Management To Extension Workers

by C. A. SVINTH, *Director of Extension, Washington*

**S**HOULD we continue to farm? How do we get capital for expansion? How do we help the kids go to college? These and other big questions face farm families in today's changing economic and social situation.

In Washington, these questions led us to emphasize the teaching of management. This fits in exactly with our farm and home planning work.

First, of course, agents needed training in how to teach management practices to farm families. Here are some of the things we did.

A team of a farm management specialist and a home management specialist was designated to develop tools and methods of doing the job. A county agent was given a full-time assignment to help them.

Several district meetings were held for county agents and one for specialists so that they could learn how to help a family use the farm and home planning process.

Workbooks were developed for families to use in the planning process. A reference book was compiled which included guides that agents and families could use in considering alternative management choices. Evaluation forms were worked out for use by families with the help of agents.

Several methods of agent training were used by the specialist team. These included: going through the planning process while a group of 15 to 25 agents observed, working through the process with a family

and a team of agents, and using the group approach with several families and several agents together. This last approach was combined with farm and home visits to each family.

Personnel from 14 counties participated in an evaluation and training conference. Extension workers were encouraged to enroll in summer courses in farm and home planning.

## *Deciding Goal*

Early in the training procedures we had to make an important decision. What are we trying to teach? We decided first that our audience was the farm family—the decision-making unit. Secondly, we were trying to teach this family how to use the management process. Thirdly, we were interested in having them understand the principles of the management process. We agreed that we could do this best by using examples based on their own problems.

In order to teach families how to use workbooks, partial budgeting, financial statements, and over-all budgets, our specialist team had to first help other extension workers develop a better understanding of these tools.

Also involved was the problem of how to evaluate the farm and home planning method. We set up three guideposts:

1. Families should make definite progress toward their goals.
2. In so doing, their goals over a period of time should become more realistic.



County agents in Washington walk a farm as part of training in farm and home planning.



Spadework sessions are held to hash out farm and home training methods. They sometimes solve old problems, come up with new approaches. Taking part in this panel are staff members Inez Eckblad, Frank Webster, Anna Jim Erickson, Dick Lasswell, and Art Peterson.



3. Families should understand the management process so that they could continue to apply it to constantly changing problems.

We ran into a number of problems in training extension workers how to teach the management process. One of the first requirements was to train ourselves to understand the social action process involved in teaching a new method. We had to learn that changing the attitudes, understanding, and skills of extension workers wasn't accomplished overnight. Understanding of the application of the process improved following workshops with agents.

### *Convincing Ourselves*

One early difficulty arose from the fact that the leaders in the training process were farm and home management subject-matter specialists. Other staff members tended to think that this was a management project rather than a method of teaching management.

We thought we could get everybody interested in teaching this even though some were not convinced of its importance. Workers were practically required to attend district training sessions even though their attitudes were unchanged and they were not of a mind to learn.

This major block in attitudes was finally removed in January 1958. At that time we had a workshop with a group of workers who had used the method. Some had not fully accepted the method but at least they were aware of it and had developed some skills in using it.

In this training conference extension workers outlined the situation relative to farm and home planning as a method, isolated the problems which had kept it from moving forward, and made suggestions for breaking these bottlenecks.

As a result of this conference, workers from 12 of the 14 counties involved went home and did an effective job of including the farm and home planning method in their program of work. In these counties the number of participating families was increased by about 50 percent in a year's time. And in the process, the attitudes of the workers toward the process swung toward the favorable side.

# Getting the Job Done

by E. P. CALLAHAN,  
*Federal Extension Service*

To effectively teach management on the farm and in the home, we must take the "problem approach" to much of our work with farmers and homemakers. This doesn't mean that we can abandon the "general recommendation" approach. It means we must recognize the differences between the two, and apply each where it is more useful.

The general recommendation approach is the usual method of teaching an improved practice. The object is to get as many as possible of the audience to adopt the recommended practice. It is assumed that the extension worker knows what the audience should do, and that all should do the same thing—adopt the recommended practice.

### *Suiting an Individual*

This approach, however, is not valid with problems for which the best solution for one farmer may not be best for another. For example, should we invest in supplemental irrigation?

The problem approach is useful with problems of the latter type. It assumes that the best solution can be worked out by logical application of sound principles. It assumes that the learner has some of this information, that the extension worker has some and that some may have to be acquired. Perhaps weather records will have to be looked up, soil survey reports studied, and prices of equipment checked.

This kind of approach leads to a tailor-made solution. It results in a decision that is best for one farmer but which may not fit another.

Solutions to many important problems hinge on family goals and

values. When families actually work problems out for themselves, they get an educational experience and are better equipped to handle future problems.

We can use the problem approach to teach people how to better work out problems for themselves—to teach management. Management can best be taught in the context of a problem.

For example, a farmer may ask, "Would it pay me to invest in supplemental irrigation?" When we have helped this farmer round up the necessary technical information, we can help him compare the likely rate of return from it with the likely rate of return from other uses of the money. We can suggest other alternatives. Then we can help him and his family size up the alternatives in terms of their relationships to the family goals. The family must choose the alternative, take action, and bear responsibility for the outcome.

### *Our Part of the Job*

If we are to teach management effectively, we need to develop our ability to help farm people identify problems and opportunities that confront them, and weigh alternatives in terms of possible results. We must be able to help them find the information that is necessary to do that. We need to ask the right questions, listen attentively, observe carefully, and counsel helpfully.

And above all, we must help them to improve their ability to manage their own affairs. This means that we must help them improve their skills in using the concepts, principles, and tools of management. The tools for choosing the best alternative include the partial budget; the concepts of risk, time, utility, fixed vs. variable costs, complementarity and substitution; the principle of diminishing returns; and the equimarginal principle.

It has been said that these are only common sense. Even so, it is a real pleasure to teach their use to an earnest farmer or homemaker while helping him or her to search out the necessary information and work out the best solution to a tough, important problem. That is one of the most challenging and rewarding kinds of extension teaching.





## What Youth Wants To Know

by M. O. WATKINS, *Director of Extension, Florida*

THE ability to manage is certainly fundamental to the success, happiness, and peace of mind of most persons. This is true of one's life as well as one's material resources.

Extension's successes and failures in Farm and Home Development and other educational activities in the management field have shown that knowledge of certain fundamental economic principles is basic to successful management. Successful application of these principles adds up to the ability to allocate resources among competing wants and needs to provide maximum satisfactions for the individual or family.

At an early age, a child begins to decide how he will allocate his resources. These decisions range from the use of pennies in his piggy bank to how he will spend his time each day.

Youth of 4-H age have to make many management decisions of basic importance to them and to their families. Perhaps the most important of these is the choice of a career, or how to best manage native abilities and talents (resources) to produce maximum satisfactions throughout life. With all of the many careers open to a young person today, this is no small decision.

So, Extension has both an opportunity and a responsibility to include management teaching in 4-H Club programs. This is not to imply that Extension has not been teaching management principles to 4-H'ers. We have, but our more recent programs

have pointed up the importance of emphasizing management more.

A recent survey in the southern region showed that a number of States have 4-H projects which deal with management. Reports indicate that States in other regions also are doing exploratory work in this field.

In 1956 the Southern Farm Management Extension Committee appointed a subcommittee to examine the problem of introducing more economics into 4-H Club work. About that time Associate Director Ernest Nesius of Kentucky, in a talk at the Southern Agricultural Workers Conference, strongly urged that more economics be included in 4-H Club work.

### *Exploring Needs*

As a result of these two separate but related lines of thinking, the southern directors of extension set up a subcommittee to explore the need. This group consists of two farm management specialists, two State 4-H Club leaders and three representatives from the Federal Extension Service, with the author as administrative adviser. The Farm Foundation underwrote the cost of the original meeting.

The subcommittee recognized the difficulties in teaching management principles to youth. These include the fact that such principles are less tangible than production projects, that other project satisfactions outweigh economic satisfactions, and

that economics deal more with concepts and principles than do the physical sciences.

Some of the economic principles and forces at work which the subcommittee feels should be taught and understood by 4-H Club members are:

- The decision-making process, including the best time to buy and sell.
- How money and other important resources are acquired.
- Principles of marginal analysis and diminishing returns and how these relate to such management decisions as the most profitable rate of fertilizing, feeding, etc.

The subcommittee recognized that to successfully teach these principles to youngsters through 4-H Club work, certain definite criteria must be met. The material taught would need to meet the needs, interests, experience, and opportunities of the age group for which it was intended, and be within the ability of this group to comprehend it.

### *Specific Projects*

It would have to be of interest to adult local leaders and within their ability to teach as well as be practical in terms of available time on the part of agents, leaders, and members. It would also have to lend itself to evaluation. The material should also embody definite subject matter and principles of use throughout life and contribute to the needs and development growth of the club member.

Objectives developed by the subcommittee embodied principles to be taught and criteria to be met. Four project areas were then set up to be developed: career exploration, money management, managing a business, and economic activities to complement existing projects.

It is recognized that these four project areas are not all-inclusive, and that other States and regions are also doing work in this field. A national committee of 4-H and home management specialists is currently developing project materials to be used in conjunction with home management projects.

In connection with career exploration, it was understood that the Extension Service did not have per-

*(See Youth Wants, page 70)*



# A Challenge To Their Thinking



by D. B. FALES, Associate State 4-H Club Leader, New York

FARM and home management is a family affair. And mighty important members of a family are those between the ages of 10 and 21—4-H'ers. Attitudes and habits are formed rapidly at this age. So it is both logical and proper to include older farm youth in the far-reaching Farm and Home Management program.

The philosophy for the 4-H phase of this program is based on experience and the realization that a majority of these young people will never become farmers. Those who do will have valuable management skills. Those who do not go into farming will have a better understanding of farm problems.

Because 4-H members are young, the things they learn will serve them over a long period of time. Management work with people of this age may help them avoid life-damaging mistakes.

A program dealing with both young men and women helps promote family unity in the complex problem of efficient farm operation. Management programs must be active and interesting to hold the attention of young people, to whom farm problems and family responsibilities are not yet everyday affairs. By enlisting the help of young people in planning the program, we could be sure of their support.

In developing the program, we realized the need for objectives dealing with farm and home management that would challenge the thinking of this group. Recognizing the age group we planned to work with, we applied regular farm and home management principles.

As a starter the following were suggested as program content: Appraising a farm—analyzing property value and potential; money management; land use; marketing; wise use of credit; insurance—importance, how much, investment, or protection; points to consider before forming partnerships; analyzing farm business records; wise buymanship; how to choose a career; ways of doing business—partnership, individually, ordinary corporation, cooperative corporation; and getting started in farming.

Educational methods varied from county to county. However, there was one important procedure that counties agreed would be standard—background information was obtained from each individual participating. This material has already proven valuable in presenting factual information to county executive committees about the program. As more of this information is gathered, it will be used in developing future programs.

Both group meetings and individ-

ual contacts have been the main methods of involving young people. Money management clubs, panel discussions, trips, personal counseling, illustrated talks, and surveys have been instrumental in attracting and holding their interest. Progress in the program, which is operating in six counties, is a result of the intensive approach.

## Training for Agents

Training schools have been held for participating agents with content determined by their expressed needs. The first meeting was held in 1957 to review progress, problems, and plans in the six counties. The group decided they needed a refresher course in agricultural economics, so a 2-day meeting was held for this purpose.

Another training school was devoted to a workshop on career counseling. This dealt with counseling in the field of agriculture in cooperation with professional guidance directors.

The fourth training school was in the field of family counseling, under the direction of the Department of Child Development and Family Relationships. All of these training schools have been helpful in pioneering this work with older farm youth.

## Varied Experiences

Statistical and case study results show some interesting progress. Last year the six counties worked with 420 young men and women averaging a little over 17 years of age. Of this number, 50 had little or no previous contact with Extension, 52 were just getting started in farming, and 100 were in the low income bracket. The program reached 140 older youth who were members of part-time farm families.

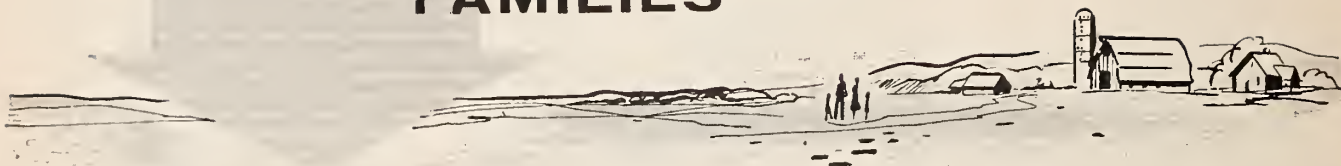
Early in the program, 4-H agents recognized a wide variety of youth problems and interests. One group of 133 had 59 different career angles with more than half the total either directly or closely related to the business of farming.

Some common interests have revolved around selecting and managing a farm, military obligations, getting started in farming, partnership

(See *A Challenge*, page 70)



# MANAGEMENT NEEDS OF YOUNG FARM FAMILIES



by **CHRISTINE H. HILLMAN**, *Professor, National Agricultural Extension Center for Advanced Study, University of Wisconsin*

**T**HE air is filled with words about new demands on families. While they still have the traditional obligations, today's families are also expected to concern themselves with and assume responsibility for community, state, and national needs. Indeed, in this era of automation, atoms, and ballistic missiles, families are expected to think on a planetary basis.

The current family is faced with untried ways of handling problems, and with untried value systems and economic practices. Uncertainty and insecurity sometimes plague its steps. Wants created by vast technological developments complicate the situation even more. In such an environment, a family's contribution to itself and to others may best be measured only in terms of how well it is able to manage.

Not all families are able to manage themselves well. Some recognize this; others do not. Some seek outside help; others hesitate to do so. Some families know where to find the assistance they need; others don't. Not all family members have need for the same type of assistance nor will they always be in agreement as to degrees of need.

Research has shown that at no stage in the family life cycle is there greater need for understanding and training in management than in the early years of marriage. It is during this period that money income may be lower and outlay usually higher as compared with the later years of marriage. Personal and economic adjustments can tax the personal ca-

pacities of the young husband and wife at this time. It is at this point that they are, indeed, making some of the most important decisions of their lives. Young farm families are faced with even more exacting problems during this period.

Young families attempting to establish themselves on farms are frequently faced not only with problems mentioned above, but others. The cost of going into farming is high. Many must be satisfied with a less productive farm or share labor and income in fulfillment of rental arrangements. Cash income may be uncertain. Housing arrangements on rented farms or the lack of certain home conveniences can lead to dissatisfactions. Sharing a house with parents with whom a young couple attempts to farm in partnership can lead to other dissatisfactions.

A high degree of maturity, determination, and the ability to manage well are required if such problems are to be met and solved to the economic and personal satisfaction of all concerned.

## *Observations and Studies*

General observation and considerable research indicate that great numbers of young farm families live far beneath their capacities for success and happiness. Ability to attain the satisfactions they dreamed of as bride and groom more often than not bears a direct relationship to how well they are able to manage.

In connection with the need for more effective education in the area

of management, let me refer briefly to three research studies completed during the past 5 years. Each involved interviews with Ohio farm families in which neither the husband nor wife was more than 35 years of age. (These studies were completed by the author when employed by the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station and the Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.)

Approximately 40 percent of the young women indicated that lack of preparation for and knowledge of homemaking tasks and responsibilities had made early adjustment to marriage difficult. Over 20 percent said that this lack of knowledge affected not only their adjustment, but the happiness and unity of their marriage as well.

Uppermost in problems was a lack of knowledge concerning: time and energy management in the home, techniques of work simplification, purchasing and management of household food, supplies, and equipment, and management of irregular farm income.

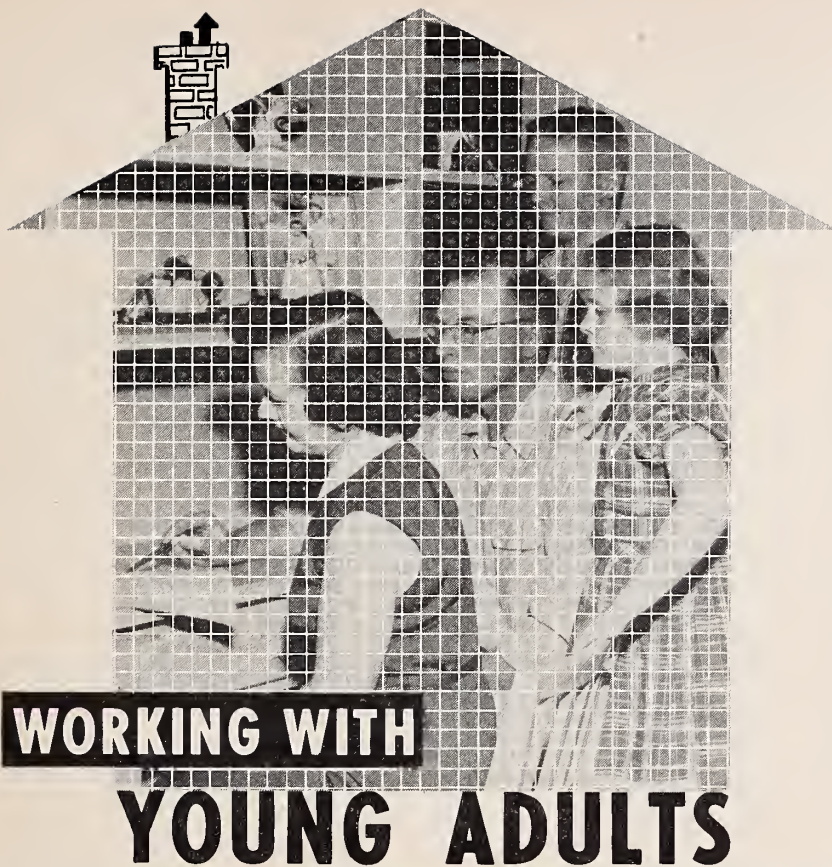
## *Money at the Root*

Over 50 percent of the couples said that improved knowledge of farm money management was a real need. At the time of study, a majority of couples was faced with absorbing money problems. Few had any basic knowledge of wise or unwise use of consumer credit, but were using it extensively.

For the most part the families had been, and still were, a fair game for impulsive buying and pressure advertising. Little understood was the

*(See Young Families, page 64)*





# WORKING WITH YOUNG ADULTS

by LOUISE WOODRUFF and C. R. MEEKER, *Home Management and Farm Management Specialists, Missouri*

FARM families in Missouri are asking Extension for more management help. At five district advisory conferences last fall, both men and women asked for this type help. In short, they said farming is a business, and people in this business need more help on business analysis, marketing, recordkeeping and home management.

In light of this and programs already underway, we are moving into three main phases of extension work with young adults—Balanced Farming, young homemakers schools, and young couples schools. The first two are in action and are proven methods. The third has been completed at the pilot county stage.

Let's look at the first, Balanced Farming. We've been working at this program more than 20 years. We've used many variations. Extra funds have helped us put 80 full-time men on this program in as many counties.

In Balanced Farming, we've found a way to help young families meet their real problems of today. First, young families can't start as easily as their parents did. It takes credit, plus management, to grow in the business now. Cash is needed just to live on the farm. So they've got to have a high net for this alone. Few can afford to take too much risk, but at the same time they must build income to live on and service their debts.

When these families join Balanced Farming, both men and women agents work closely with them on their management problems. We've found that families want to face their problems squarely. They work out sound farm plans, based on good financial management plans. They use records to guide progress and as a basis for decisions. Last year some 20 percent of the Missouri families working with Extension on Balanced Farming were under 35 years of age.

The second phase of our management program has to do with schools for young homemakers. More than 2,000 young wives studied home management at these schools during 1957 and 1958. Such schools were held in 58, or just over half the counties of the State. Seldom has a program reached half the State effectively in so short a time.

## *Young Adult Program*

Like other States we had worked with R.Y.O. groups. But our program lacked punch. We just didn't reach the young men and women that we should. The young homemakers schools resulted from a new program for young adults which was started under the leadership of Marion Beebe, a State 4-H agent who was a young homemaker herself. In 1956, two schools in pilot counties enrolled about 80 young wives. This group pretty well planned their own program with management in the home as the key topic.

The next year we were ready to push the program Statewide. Most county groups selected management, with a few putting their emphasis on foods or clothing. Schools for the most part included a series of five weekly meetings. Main subjects were, Is There a Better Way, Living on 24 Hours a Day, Making Kitchen Work Easier, Good Grooming for Homes, and More for Your Money. Each student analyzed her own work methods and work areas in the home and tried out new ideas for conserving her time, energy, and money.

## *Classes and Homework*

Specialist help consisted of training home agents and help in outlining course work, teacher and student manuals, planning class activities, and preparing suggested illustrative material.

In addition to the intensive classes, students were given homework assignments. And to add zest to the graduation exercises, to which husbands were invited, diplomas were awarded. Most home agents said the schools proved to be the most rewarding activity in their experience.

Students asked for more classes and most reenrolled the next year. Schools

(See *Young Adults*, page 64)



# Bearing Down on Management Pushes Up Satisfaction



by **STEPHEN J. BRANNEN**, *Extension Economist, Georgia*

**M**AKING decisions or choices is the real heart of management. This involves recognizing, appraising, and choosing alternative means and ends.

In our society the family is the basic decision making unit. Its management problems arise from the choices it has to make. These problems are complicated by the competition between production and consumption activities for the use of the family's resources. And family goals sometimes compete with the goals of the individual member.

Children of high school or college age bring added management problems to the family circle. Although their families may be established in size and occupation, peculiar complexities are added to management problems.

The day-to-day management problems of older children are serious and must be recognized by the parent.

These younger family members have scarce resources to allocate—time and money. While each youth's time and money is his own, it is also a part of the family's resource bundle. And it is a delicate problem for the parents to help their children reconcile the short-term use of their time and money with family goals without becoming antiquated old fogies in their children's eyes.

## *Short vs. Long-Time Goals*

Then, too, there's the problem of keeping the family's short-time goals consistent with its long-time goals. For example, a son's expenditure for a socially and psychologically necessary "hot-rod" may be inconsistent with the family's current finances, or even the son's own need to save for his education.

Too few families do systematic planning of the family business on a long-time basis. Research has shown that only 35 percent of southern farm owner-operated households recognized a need for a business desk in the home. Perhaps this is because they fail to recognize management as the key factor to more satisfactory living.

A well conceived and planned long-range program provides some guidelines to use in weighing shorter range problems and deciding what is best today in light of tomorrow's desires. A series of goals can be established, ranked according to importance. Each short-run goal can contribute toward a long-run goal. Each small goal can be made consistent with larger and more important goals.

## *Children Are Partners*

Parents need to let older children participate as management partners in family decisions. This helps to get the children's problems considered. In addition, children develop a sense of responsibility for family goals as they share in choosing them. They gain insight into the management process and become more systematic in sorting fact from fantasy. They become able to recognize that satisfying day-to-day wants may erase the attainment of superior goals.

Even families that have become fairly well established have that age-old problem of separating means and

ends. More satisfaction is the ultimate end or superior goal of the family. The material resources, skills, and talents of the family are the means they can use to achieve satisfaction.

At first glance, higher income may appear to be the answer to all problems. It would certainly help, in most cases, because it is the means of satisfying many needs. But more income could be used for a variety of purposes.

Whatever the level of income, skilled money management can help the family achieve greater satisfaction in life. It makes the money go further, and greater satisfaction from what we have is our ultimate goal in decision making. Increasing our income is a means to that end.

## *Family Security*

Achieving a degree of financial security, while meeting the heavy drain of teen-agers on family finances, can be a special problem. Reduction of capital in the family's income-producing business often occurs so that investments in education can be made for the children. Family protection in the form of insurance is sometimes sacrificed because of the need for current income to meet college expenses. Production facilities may be neglected to the extent that income flow from them is jeopardized. For example, machinery breakdowns at the peak of the busy season are extremely costly.

Then there's the problem of having too few resources with which to achieve family wants. Adjustment of wants to more practical needs may sometimes be necessary to avoid complete frustration.

Often an increase in the resources at the family's command is practical. However, bitter experience has made many families, especially rural families, extremely conservative. Superior opportunities may be given up because of undue conservatism. Some families get left behind by others who, having considered the odds, are willing to take the risk.

Systematic evaluation of the different routes the family can take to acquire or gain command of more

(See *Satisfaction*, page 70)





by JOHN N. FISKE, *Napa County Farm Advisor, California*

**A**DEQUATE physical resources and capital, coupled with production skills, are well-known essential ingredients for modern farming. Yet they are like a stalled motor unless sparked to action by dynamic management.

In teaching management to established farm families in Napa County, we consider our various types of operators and the type of farm organization found here.

Napa County, one of the earliest in the State to develop an organized agriculture, is now within the rapidly growing San Francisco metropolitan area. Climatic conditions and scenic beauty have attracted many retired or semiretired families who like to live in a rural environment. Some of these people wish to supplement their incomes with small-scale or part-time farming. Others choose to live in this area but are employed by the government or nearby industrial plants.

At the same time, large-scale commercial farming and ranching is still practiced. For example, the county is noted for its production of high-quality table wines. This industry, like many others, is undergoing vertical integration. Some commercial growers are affiliated with large cooperative wineries; others are becoming affiliated with commercial wineries or are being absorbed by them as the wineries enter the field of grape growing.

The problem of teaching management must be tailored to fit the needs of these diverse groups.

We also recognize that our farm

organization is geared largely to a single enterprise and highly capitalized operation. There are relatively few typical "family farms" as the term is understood in some parts of the country. Those with such units usually have other ample supplemental income and can afford the luxury of being nostalgic.

From the many management problems, we have selected eight which we consider of current primary importance: lack of records, poor farm organization, decisions influenced by salesmen, improper unit size, inadequate capital, failure to recognize and adopt new methods, poor timing of operations, and not enough planning.

### *Problems and Approaches*

We have found that no one method of teaching does this properly. So we have set up management teaching as a basic force in our extension program, applying it in several ways.

**Field meetings:** These have been used to show comparison between bulk and fine methods of pruning and different plant spacing systems as they affect management. They are also valuable in showing how management may be affected by the use of new equipment, such as bulk handling of grapes, mechanical pruning aids, and livestock scales.

**Demonstration plots:** These set up comparisons under controlled conditions. They help set the stage for field meetings and they stimulate interest in new ideas that still may be in the research stage. An example is the use of gibberellic acid on

grapes to loosen clusters subject to bunch rot.

**Grower meetings:** Since we are involved in a specialized agriculture, these meetings usually are held with commodity groups. Through them we are able to teach specific management methods including efficient use of labor and record and account keeping. We have been able through such meetings to improve management methods in crop harvest, an important cost item in our county.

**Special Projects:** Eight years ago we started a prune maturity study on a test plot basis. From this developed a campaign that has completely changed harvest timing and methods. Prior to this work, the harvest period was chaotic. Labor shortages, jammed dehydrators, lower quality fruit, and excessive cost were common. The prune maturity campaign helped reduce many such losses.

Special projects have also been used to improve overall management, as in the case of the dairy herd improvement program where records are used to teach management.

### *Mass Approach*

**Circulars and newsletters:** California's large size and wide diversification of products impels county offices to produce much of their own teaching material. This enables us to tell growers quickly about newly developed varieties adapted to present market needs. We also can answer specific local questions such as, "What spray programs will meet our needs this year?"

Management is also taught through newsletters sent to commodity groups.

**Mass media:** Newspaper stories, articles in farm journals, and radio programs are also used to stimulate interest. They provide success stories of new management methods and ideas. They announce meetings, tours, and current publications aimed at better management.

These media also provide new information which may change production practices. They are useful in teaching labor management, including the retention of some workers after peak labor loads to perform other needed tasks.

(See *Tailored for Needs*, page 68)

# MANAGEMENT

helps

open the door

by F. A. BROCKMAN, Young  
Adult Work Specialist, Kentucky



CAN management be taught to low-income farm families? Yes, but it's not an easy task. A few characteristics of low-income farm families point out some problems in teaching them management.

More than half of the nation's 1.2 million low-income farmers are over 55 years of age. Many of them are blinded to their best interest by traditionalism. By virtue of their age and stage in the family cycle, they are more concerned about health and security than in adopting improved practices requiring expenditure of funds. Often capital or credit is not available to them.

The majority of low-income farm families own small acreage, profitably employing less than half the available labor. They have little opportunity for off-farm employment to supplement their income. Many try to farm in the same way as larger farmers, resulting in over mechanization and poor selection of enterprises.

The educational level of low-income farm families is much lower than the average for all adult farm people. This is not necessarily because of lack of ability but because of lack of opportunity to obtain more education. As a general rule, in an area of low income farmers there are also poor schools, roads, etc. Thus lack of income often pre-

vents the youth from obtaining enough education to get good off-farm jobs.

Low-income farm families are not active participants in community and civic affairs. They do not take part in planning extension programs. In many instances programs are planned by and for the upper income farmers.

## Teaching Methods

In low-income, subsistence agriculture, the farm and the home cannot be dealt with as separate units. There is a need for assisting the family to make plans for the farm along with plans for family living.

An appraisal of extension methods, in view of the characteristics of low-income families, clearly indicates that to teach management the extension workers must use the personal contact approach. In a number of communities, particularly with kinship groups, the small group approach may be used. Even this must be preceded by personal contact to gain the confidence of the families.

One agent in Kentucky spends a half day on the farm and in the home of each family he enrolls in Farm and Home Development. Time consuming? Yes, but this visit enables him to get a better understanding of the family and their resources, and

be a more effective teacher of small groups. In addition he gains the confidence of the family and inspires them to want to do better.

The Farm and Home Development approach with small community groups of families with similar problems, followed by farm and home visits, has proved to be the most successful method of teaching management to low-income families. The importance of on-the-farm planning has been demonstrated numerous times.

## Age Distinctions

Too often we think of management principles and cannot see a ray of hope for low-income families. But we must keep in mind two distinct groups of these families. The older families are going to remain on that farm, for there is seldom any other alternative. We must motivate them to do better, before we can teach management.

Our appeal must be to their primary interests of health and security. After a careful appraisal of the resources with the family, we must get them to see their opportunities and create a desire to bridge the gap from where they are to where they could be. Among older families,

(See *Open the Door*, page 68)



# PLANNING leads to better family living

by KATHERINE SIMPSON, *Farm and Home Planning Specialist, Mississippi*

**F**IND a way to encourage and assist farm families to a better and richer family life. This has long been a challenge to extension workers. Today, due to the numerous changes confronting agriculture and family living, an even greater effort must be exerted.

By taking an intensive look at each individual family's available resources, problems, and needs, many situations have been and are being improved. So we increasingly use the Farm and Home Planning approach.

Every farm family is constantly faced with problems relative to their farm and home. Solutions are not easily found. This may be partly due to their different or limited amounts of resources, interests, and abilities.

Farm and Home Planning gives a family an opportunity to face up to their situation—and at the same time supplies up-to-date information and ideas pertinent to their particular problems. Under these conditions, a family is provided with alternatives and is in a better position to make decisions.

One secret to the success of how well family decisions are made is how well family members plan together. When the entire family sits down with the extension agent and discusses their farm and home activities and goals for the future,

then the family has started on the way to sound farm and home planning.

As a result of this procedure, agents are better prepared to supply the family with necessary information. And agents often find themselves in the position of both teaching and guiding.

Perhaps the hardest obstacle to overcome in working individually with families is getting them to want to improve their present condition.

## *Moving with the Family*

Velma Thompson, associate home demonstration agent of Covington County, says that patience and understanding on the part of the extension worker is the key to unlocking this condition. She points out that until a family has confidence in and realizes that the extension worker has a direct and sincere interest, any change for progress or improvement is slow.

"Not until we talk of their problems and interests can we gain the necessary confidence," Miss Thompson says. "As I look back, one of my worst mistakes was trying to get people to move at a faster pace than they were ready to move."

This points up a factor that extension agents must be cognizant of—

through this method of approach, in helping to recognize and find a solution to their problems, it must be the family's desire when any improvements are made. Not until the family is ready to move is it wise to encourage change in any farm or home activities. Through counseling with family members, we have observed improved land use, increased crop yields, better meals, and more appropriately dressed individuals. And it has been especially rewarding to note the change in personal appearance and development of family members.

Christine Brand, associate home demonstration agent of Neshoba County, relates the following from experiences in working with families. "Agents sometimes feel that too much time is spent teaching practices rather than doing actual planning. However, through this channel we have been able to build confidence and get planning started. Progress is often slow in a material way. One who does not know where a family started sometimes cannot see the progress that has been made.

"In many cases, the change has been in attitudes and interests. For example, we worked with a family that was timid and reluctant to talk. The father and boys would leave for the barn when the associate agent made a visit. Now these same members come in to visit and fully discuss their farm and home operations. And the whole family is active in the church as well as the Rural Community Development Club, which previously they only attended occasionally."

## *Slow, Sure Progress*

Another instance of progress for better family living is found in this account from an agent. "This family, consisting of the parents and four children ages 3 months to 11 years, depended on a 36½ acre farm for a living. They had a five-room shotgun house in need of repair. There were no cows to furnish milk, but a gallon jug of artificially flavored orange drink was usually on the table.

"Any work with this family seemed an uphill job. The agents made

(See *Family Living*, page 68)

## YOUNG ADULTS

*(Continued from page 59)*

in 1958 covered home decorating and will include simplified sewing this year.

We think that these schools have been the major factor in increasing the number of young women in home economics extension clubs. Our records at the end of 1958 showed that the number of members under 35 increased from 9 to 14 percent. This was the first contact with Extension for almost half the students.

Home visits and help with followup projects were requested by many of the school graduates. And of great importance is the fact that many are now working with extension as family groups, some in the Balanced Farming program.

### *Encouraging Young Couples*

To give further impetus along these lines, we are organizing our third phase for working with young adults—young couples schools.

This is a new program. We used it in four pilot counties in 1958. Each county group planned its own study program but farm management key-noted most. These were successful to the point that the programs are being started in 58 counties in 1959.

Plans were formulated at a series of district conferences for agents and young adult leaders last fall. Then we held agent training meetings to help county personnel prepare for the schools where they will serve as discussion and workshop leaders.

An outline of training includes: study of farm business summaries and analysis of several Missouri farms, with emphasis on factors which determine net income; organization of the farm business; use of credit; leasing agreements and how to improve them; recordkeeping and budgeting. Specialist help consists of providing agents with a teaching outline, teaching materials, subject matter, and visuals.

Overall purpose is to teach basic principles of farm management. A secondary objective, of course, is to try and get these young adult families to follow up with more intensive work as regular cooperators in the Balanced Farming program.

Each of these three programs is carried out locally by the agents in their respective counties. This we believe is the main reason for their success.

## BOX OF TOOLS

*(Continued from page 52)*

food and clothing plans, and educational planning.

The important point is that a management education program is centered around teaching use of analytical tools. This is perhaps done best by use of the individual family's problems, but it is by no means the only way. Just as important as the conclusion reached is family understanding of the analysis technique. If this is accomplished, they will be able to analyze similar problems in the future.

### *Evaluation*

"Are the families I have worked with well equipped to handle all the necessary management decisions in the future?" This self-addressed question is the best evaluation an extension worker can make of his management education attempts. If the question can be answered affirmatively, then the effort has been directed correctly.

When asked how he could tell if his Farm and Home Development co-operators were becoming better equipped as managers, one of Wisconsin's most successful extension agents answered this way. "Families starting on the program ask for recommendations on the course of action they should follow and seldom ask questions regarding alternatives. After a year or two of intensive work, these same families raise many questions about any course of action and seldom ask what they should do."

These families have achieved marked increases in family income and levels of living. They have been successfully taught the importance of being inquisitive and considering alternatives. They realize that the family must accept the consequence of decisions reached and therefore are girding themselves with as much management skill as possible. This is the true mark of accomplishment in management education.

## YOUNG FAMILIES

*(Continued from page 58)*

fact that wise use of credit begins with wise expenditures and the knowledge of how to use credit intelligently. The families especially wanted help in consumer choice-making.

A majority of the young couples were sincerely interested in learning to better understand their problems. They wanted an opportunity to further their training in those areas which we have come to call inter-farm-household relationships and management.

### *Sources of Education*

Isn't this training a part of parental or school responsibility? It might be. On the other hand, few parents or schools can be expected to provide a future homemaker (boy or girl) with all the understanding and skills that he or she might need or effectively command. Further educational opportunities may be necessary.

This need becomes acute when the young couple find themselves in a home of their own faced with problems which must be solved independently of parents or classrooms. Then they will more likely identify problems, recognize reasonable goals, and need help in making choices.

This appeared to be the point of need reached by most of the young families in these studies. Their preparation for future responsibilities is clearly a problem about which most of us as educators must be realistic. This means recognizing need for increased emphasis on education for homemaking, family living, and improved management at the adult level.

These studies indicate that families need help in clarifying their values in relation to family needs and goals. It would appear that families also need help in reaching independent decisions.

If education is to be helpful, we must be sensitive to the total complex of today's living and teach in terms of realities. Extension's work can become increasingly significant to all who work for better family living through the mastery of improved managerial skills.



# putting GLITTER in the Golden Years

by ROBERT S. SMITH, Professor of  
Farm Management, New York

FARM families now approaching retirement are the first generation to have "grown up" with Extension. Many of them learned to look to Extension for guidance and counsel as young farmers, and have been extension cooperators all their farming life times. As they near retirement, they face many new problems and will naturally turn to Extension for help.

Farm and Home Development and management problems have tended to emphasize work with young farm families. But emphasis is also needed on management work with other age groups—particularly farm families over 55.

## Sizable Group

A plea for the importance of extension assistance with older farm families could be based on sheer numbers. Census figures show that about one-sixth of our farmers are already 65 or over, and that about 37 percent have passed the 55-year milestone. A study of commercial dairy farms in northern New York State found 25 percent of the operators 60 or over, 46 percent 50 or over.

An educational program with older farmers should start with the knowledge that they make up a large proportion of the total. It must further recognize that this age group has special characteristics. Older farmers have less formal education than younger farmers; they have smaller farms and accomplish less work per man. They make less profit from their

farm operations, but it is safe to assume that they have less debt than do younger farmers.

## Special Problems

Many management problems of farm families stem from the particular phase of the family life cycle they happen to be in. Farm families approaching retirement have their share of special management decisions related to their particular age.

Although their families are grown, consideration for the children strongly influences most management decisions of older farm couples. Two-generation farm operating and transfer arrangements pose management problems with which Extension can lend assistance.

The process of building a sound profit-sharing arrangement between the established farmer and the younger generation while gradually transferring ownership calls for sound decision making. When a 60-year-old father is farming with a 30-year-old son, the economic and social relationships between the two families are at a critical stage. The older generation must take the initiative in paving the way for shifting management responsibility and farm ownership to the younger generation.

Usually the family is without experience in dealing with this problem. More and more, they will look to Extension for competent, unbiased counsel.



Estate-planning is another problem which is more acute and real for farmers facing retirement. And again, as with family ownership and transfer problems, consideration for the younger generation is a dominant influence. Extension has a definite responsibility to teach the need for estate planning, and to provide information which will give a sound basis for family decision-making on this problem.

## Changing Ideas

In the past, planning for retirement has been more of an idea than an actuality for the majority of farm families. Studies in Kansas, Wisconsin, and New York have shown that farmers have given little thought to retirement.

The introduction of Social Security to farm family financial planning brought changes in farmers' thoughts about retirement. Social Security provides a base upon which farmers' retirement plans can be constructed. Extension should recognize this new outlook toward farm retirement and help couples study alternative ways of financial planning for later years.

As commercial farm businesses have become larger, in terms of dollar investment, and more intensified, it has become more and more difficult for farmers to "retire on the farm." In order to safeguard his investment, a farmer must move forward with the times.

This situation has placed the older farmer in a difficult position. It poses management decisions he has not faced before—decisions which will strongly affect his financial security in old age. Should a man of 55 or 60 expand his operation to keep up? If he does, it means more responsibility and physical work, which at his age is hard to accept. If he doesn't, he falls behind and his business becomes less profitable and less salable 5 or 10 years hence.

Most of the special management problems of older farmers center around farm business and family financial planning. Extension management programs can make contributions in both areas.

Extension programs in the area of

(See *Golden Years*, page 70)

# Putting Traction in Our Teaching

by CLAY CUNDIFF, *Better Farming and Better Living Agent*, and PATRICIA MAULLER, *Home Demonstration Agent, Elkhart County, Ind.*

*Editor's Note: Better Farming and Better Living is Indiana's name for Farm and Home Development. The work started in Elkhart County in the fall of 1955 and 198 families are now participating. Agents Mauller and Cundiff have a waiting list because their results have been excellent. Besides numerous tangible and intangible results, the actual net worth of the families with whom they work increased an average of \$2,813 in 1958.*

UNLESS sound management principles are taught, accepted, and used, Extension will spin its wheels with little result. Extension can spoon-feed families for years but the acceptance rate will be low unless families understand the steps of problem-solving.

We teach the basic concept of management, as it applies to any problem, in the Better Farming and Better Living phase of our work. This is done cooperatively by the authors in three all-day group meetings with approximately 20 to 25 families.

## Subject Matter for Groups

*Family goals*—Stimulate family thinking about selection of goals.

*Opportunities and requirements of farming*—Teach basic economic principles as they affect agriculture.

*Steps of management*—Help the family understand the steps of the management process.

*Crops*—Factors considered in planning an effective cropping system; function of various crops within the system; comparison of various crops and crop rotations; importance of soil testing.

*Livestock*—Characteristics of various classes; the ratio of feed, labor, and capital requirements and the returns for various classes.

*Farm family business*—Steps to financial management and good business practices concerning investments and transfer of property.

*Tools for farm planning*—Explain worksheets and budget forms.

*Tools for management of time*—Stimulate interest in methods to eliminate wasted time and motion and introduce ways to incorporate these in the family plans.

*Farm and home visit*—A half-day visit to the farm and home of one of the group. The farm business operation is used as an example to teach budgeting procedure to the families. Home and family living problems are studied by the women. During the afternoon the families divide into groups to budget plans of operation for the farm visited.

## Individual Contacts

Application of the actual management process to each farm and family is accomplished through individual contacts.

First the Better Farming—Better Living Agent schedules a full-day visit with each family. He counsels with them in the use of the planning guide to determine family goals and their priority. The agent assists the family in budgeting the present farm operation and various alternatives. This gives the family various courses of action that may be used to help reach their goals.

Two or three weeks after the alternatives have been determined, the agents return to help complete the planning guide. Courses of action are determined by the family and the steps required to implement the plan are listed in detail.

As the family begins to put their plan into action, they may call on the extension agents for technical assistance in its implementation, or for additional counsel.

One year later the agents visit the family to go over the planning guide. We check actual detailed accomplishments of the family and calculate their economic progress in terms of net worth. Another planning guide determines family goals and project plans for another year.

## Helping One Couple

We worked, for instance, with a young couple named Joe and Helen, who were faced with a difficult family problem. Joe was in partnership with his Dad on a 160-acre farm. There were eight older brothers and sisters who objected to some of Joe's ideas.

It appeared that the best thing would be for Joe and Helen to find another farm. They decided to rent one owned by a local businessman and his wife.

We encouraged the owners to come to BF and BL meetings with Joe and Helen. As a follow-up, we met with the four for a look at their own farm and home planning problems. It was a happy meeting—tremendous progress resulted in only one year.

On the farm side, both landlord and tenant understood problems involved and realized that more volume was needed to get satisfactory income for both families.

Complete tests were made on 220 acres and fertilizer and lime applied according to needs. Field arrangements were changed and new rotations established. A brooder house has been remodeled to provide for 12 brood sows and an old hog house remodeled for 200 fattening and growing pigs.

A large horse barn has been remodeled for loose dairy housing and calf stalls. A bulk tank and pipeline milker were installed and a concrete lot has been built, allowing outside watering and hay feeding of the 38-cow dairy herd. A large upright silo has been built with an automatic feeding bunk.

On the home side, the two families decided the farm should pay some debts before the house is remodeled. The lawn has been renovated and flowers seeded.

Extension agents do less individual counseling after the families under-

(See *Traction in Teaching*, page 70)



# Management for Part-Time Farmers

by E. H. HARTMANS, *Farm Management Specialist, Minnesota*

**T**ODAY'S part-time farmers include an ever-growing number of families which (a) are in transition from part-time to full-time commercial farming, (b) use part-time farming as a step to full time employment in industry, and (c) combine part-time farming with outside work or Social Security benefits on a more permanent basis.

Although income opportunities for part-time farmers vary from one area to another, some conditions and management principles apply throughout the country. The extension worker should be aware of these.

## *Labor Supply and Use*

A person with a steady outside job will usually work 40 hours per week and quite often has to travel another 5-10 hours to and from his work. This totals 2,000-2,500 hours per year. So he has seldom more than a few hours per day available for farm work and no more than 1,000 hours per year. As a result, the quality and efficiency of farm activities that have short peak labor requirements are apt to be low.

On the other hand, farmers with seasonal nonfarm jobs may have a plentiful labor supply during some months and very little during others. This may allow the selection of crops and livestock with high seasonal labor requirements.

Because of the priority rating of the nonfarm job, efficiency levels in crop and livestock production of the part-time farmer are generally lower than those of full-time farmers. This is particularly true for enterprises that require an eye for details, such as a dairy herd.

Studies in Ohio, Minnesota, and other States found that many part-time farmers are actually subsidizing the farm business with income from the outside job. Principal reasons for this are improper selection of crops

and livestock and low efficiency levels.

Because of the limited labor supply, the size of the total farm business has to be relatively small. Yet present costs in agriculture, with heavy fixed overhead cost, require a certain volume of business to put the farm in the profitable range. Some enterprises need such a large volume of business to be profitable that little labor is left for outside employment.

The above considerations lead to some important management guides.

- Because of limited available labor, the part-time farmer should select enterprises that can be operated efficiently on a small scale.

- He should generally select those enterprises that will give the highest net return per hour of labor rather than per acre of land.

- He should keep his overhead costs down to a minimum, particularly machinery costs.

- He should fit enterprises to available labor.

In order to help apply these management guides to an individual farm, the extension worker needs local input-output data about crops and livestock. Many States already have such background data; others may need to develop it.

Certain enterprises have a definite advantage for the part-time farmer. He usually conforms, however, to the dominant type of farming in his particular area. Yet, the type and amount of labor supply and degree of management available require a special type of farm organization and operation for the part-time farmer.

## *Advantages—Disadvantages*

Although primary emphasis here is on the cash returns, for many, part-time farming is a means of gaining personal and family satisfactions. Such values can hardly be expressed in terms of money.

Depending on the previous background of an individual and his family, they may or may not be affected by certain advantages of living on a part-time farm.

A family will have to weigh security of housing and family living in the event of job layoff against relatively low cash returns to labor and capital inputs of the family operating a part-time farm to supplement off-farm wages.

Part-time farming lends occupational variety and change, both daily and seasonal, to the business of earning the family's living. On the other hand, chore routine is monotonous and requires long hours of work while holding down an off-farm job, too.

The quiet and peacefulness of country living contrasts to the noise, hustle and bustle of the industrial city. There is time and opportunity for outdoor recreation, meditation, mental and physical vigor for the parents and their growing children. But, lack of ready access to public services, entertainment, and varied social life confronts rural families.

Real value of rural property appreciates over time. Probable gain in the family's net worth also results from time and effort put into improvement. Less mobility, plus difficulty of finding ready sale for real property without financial sacrifice, may be drawbacks.

The part-time farm's contribution to the family's real income position (in dollars, savings opportunity, better living) must be weighed against time and money costs of travel to and from the off-farm job, school, or church.

It appears that part-time farming, where any real volume of farming is involved, should be given a careful analysis. Disadvantages will often outweigh advantages for many families. In many instances rural residency may be more advantageous.



## FAMILY LIVING

(Continued from page 63)

repeated visits—encouraging them to analyze their situation and see what possibilities existed. Each visit increased the confidence of the family in the agents and after many months a gradual change was evident.

"A cow was bought to provide milk for the children. The windows were screened. The pride and joy of the homemaker were new living room curtains she had made. They bought 30 acres of land, leased additional acres, fenced a pasture for the cow, and began following recommended practices in farming."

Improvements like these keep agents encouraged, but at the same time remind us that progress is slow.

### Value of Visits

Failure of the agents to get into the homes and on the farms as often as needed sometimes presents a problem. In order to avoid this, schedules are made for their visits. The number of daily visits an agent is able to make depends on the type of assistance a family needs. By careful planning, many are able to see from three to four families each day.

When possible, the associate farm and home agents visit together. On other occasions, depending on the work underway, it may be necessary to travel alone.

There is no substitute for this farm and home visit. It is here that both the agent and the family become better acquainted and share their problems and possibilities for solution.

Mrs. Barbara McMillan, associate home demonstration agent in Walhall County, says, "Through home visits the agent has a closer contact and relationship than any other means of communication. All family planning has been done through home visits."

Another method this same agent used to reach families was check sheets. By asking farm families to check their interests, wants, or needs, she was able to keep up-to-date on family thinking, interests, and activities. Oftentimes these sheets were used as an entree to the farm and home visit. They serve as the source

of reaching the family's main interests.

As a result of the close contact with family members, Mrs. McMillan reports, "Women taking part in Farm and Home Planning are exerting favorable influences on their neighbors. One new home demonstration club has been organized in a community never before interested. A Farm and Home Planning homemaker served as the first president, and now is active in all county-wide council activities."

To be most effective, Farm and Home Planning must be integrated into the general extension State and county activities. It cannot be set aside as a separate approach. It is a method of working with people's problems, and as people understand, they cooperate. Through this cooperation, better family living results.

## TAILORED FOR NEEDS

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*Individual approach:* We have used contacts made through office and telephone calls or on farm visits to explore thoroughly the reasons behind the initial question. This has proved to be an excellent method of teaching better management. The question asked is often simple, such as those about spider mites on trees or vines. We try to determine the facts behind such questions and often discover that management problems, seemingly unrelated to the initial question, are at the root of the problem.

This leads us to the next approach, that of more complete farm analysis and planning. This has taken two forms in Napa County. The first is individual assistance in analyzing the entire farm to improve management methods. In cases where several enterprises are involved, help is given in the choice and selection of those best suited to the unit.

The second is small neighborhood meetings of farmers who have common interests and problems. In these meetings, management methods of different operators are compared, and then checked against those of successful operators in other areas of the county or State.

Management teaching must be included in all phases of our extension

program. It isn't a subject to be taught alone. Each staff member must have sufficient training in the management field to include it in all phases of his work.

Skills and resources are only a means to an end. Success always depends on good management.

## OPEN THE DOOR

(Continued from page 62)

Social Security offers motivation for increasing income through applying improved practices that will lead to greater financial security.

Younger low-income families should be made to clearly see their limited opportunities, to farm, as well as the alternatives available. The welfare of their children can easily be used as a motivating tool. Once a decision is reached by the family, Extension should refer them to other agencies that can be of assistance.

### Teaching Pointers

In teaching management, whether by individual farm visits or in small community groups, there are a few points extension workers should keep in mind.

- Avoid using professional lingo. Principles should be stated in simple understandable terms, with examples applicable to the particular farm.

- Avoid generalities—be specific to the particular enterprises on the farm. Relate principles to what the family has and wants.

- Help the older family to make better use of what they have. This is more profitable than trying to get them to acquire additional resources.

- Locate and work with leaders of low-income groups. This often helps to open the doors to other families.

Since 1940 we have witnessed great economic growth in this country. Our gross national product has increased nearly threefold; farm income more than tripled. The number of low income farm families has decreased by almost a million. Yet poverty conditions still exist among almost one-third of our farm people. Who is in a better position to be of assistance to these low-income people than Extension?



# Measuring Progress in Management

by MURRAY A. STRAUS,  
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**A**TTEMPTS to measure farm and home management programs—or for that matter any program of planned change—in the United States are faced with difficulties.

These arise primarily from two facts. The first is that such programs occur in a society already undergoing rapid changes. The second major difficulty comes from our commitment to use democratic and voluntary methods. By looking at some ways of setting up evaluation studies, we can see how these two facts get in the way.

## *Comparing Participants*

One method of checking a management program is to compare those who are in it with a group which is not. An agent working with a farm management specialist could develop a questionnaire or test which is suited to local conditions and can be objectively scored.

Such a test should probably include questions to find out such things as whether the family: (1) recognizes the fact that good management makes a difference; (2) sees what their own management problems are; (3) has available and makes use of decision-making tools such as records, budgets, and plans; (4) makes use of information sources (books, bulletins, Soil Conservation Service, Extension) to arrive at decisions; (5) considers several alternatives before making major decisions; and (6) is willing to take moderate risks in order to carry out needed managerial actions.

But in comparing progress of participants and non-participants, we come up against a problem. We know that those who work with Extension tend to be somewhat above the average of farmers in their area. This is especially likely to be true in the case of programs emphasizing management.

For example, a recent study in North Carolina, Washington, and Wisconsin found that Farm and Home Development participants differed from other farm families in education and occupational experience, tenure and financial status, communication and information seeking behavior, and attitudes and values.

These differences all point to the same conclusion: The self-selection process results in a group which is above average in managerial ability before the program even starts. If we had made this comparison after the program started, we would have incorrectly concluded that the difference was due to participating in the program!

## *Before and After Methods*

Next is the evaluation which an agent might do by asking everyone in his program to fill out a management questionnaire before starting the program. Then a year or two later he could ask them to fill out the same questionnaire. By comparing the scores and answers after participation in the program with those before, he can estimate the amount of improvement in management ability.

But this kind of evaluation study also has a snare. It can tell us if participating families have improved one aspect of their decision making skill. But it cannot tell us if the improvement is due to the effects of the program.

The level of management ability is generally rising in American agriculture. So all or part of the progress might simply be a reflection of this general trend. This is especially likely when (as is usually the case) the program enrolls the people who are likely to have higher than average education and larger than average farms.

The above study methods are very

common. But we should recognize their limitations and when possible use evaluation which lets the participants be systematically compared over time with a nonparticipant group. This strategy in effect combines the two previous methods.

This kind of study represents a great improvement over the one dimensional type of study. Using this method, it is possible to tell not only if the participants have made progress in management, or whether the participants have a higher level of management ability, but whether the amount of increase in management ability made by the participants is importantly greater than that made by the nonparticipants.

## *Other Variables*

There are still some loose ends which need to be tied down before we can really credit improvements in management to the program. A few paragraphs back we noted that participants in voluntary programs of this type differ from the average of farmers in their counties in ways that are related to the success of the program.

This means that an accurate estimate of the effects of a management program requires not only a control group type of study, but also that the control group be matched at the start of the program in respect to such characteristics as education and size of farm, which are likely to influence the effectiveness of the program.

## *Good Tools*

Each of these three general ways of evaluation studies has limitations—some more severe than others. Even the first two kinds of studies can be valuable tools for a management program. They can supply important information about the level of management skills of the groups we are working with, and about the amount of progress which the participants have made.

But if one of the objectives of evaluation study is to find out just what progress in management is due to the program, then only a research strategy like the “matched control group before-after experiment” can do the job.



## SATISFACTION

*(Continued from page 60)*

resources is often necessary. For example, renting of farm land may be better than over-extension of debt to buy more land.

Many families have the peculiar problem of conflict between production expenses and family consumption expenses. If funds are limited, the purchase of a bulk milk tank and pipeline milkers as a means of improving future income may have to compete with the immediate purchase of a new auto.

Other families are confronted with the problem of the mother taking a job or else giving up new living room furniture or some other thing the family desires.

Older youth in families are faced with the choice of a career. They must examine several vocations to compare such things as potential earnings, qualification requirements, and time and money required to adequately prepare for successful work in each field. They have to choose between going and not going to college. If college is elected, they must choose which college to attend and which course of study to pursue. Such decisions need to be made systematically, using all available information, recognizing all alternatives and weighing each carefully.

Families face a myriad of other decisions related to production and consumption. These decisions lie at many different levels of importance and vary widely in significance.

Certain ones affect matters of great concern and enduring consequences; others deal with minor matters of temporary importance. For example, a decision about whether to enlarge the business can have a large and lasting effect. A wrong decision here may never be overcome. But the effects of a decision about what to do tomorrow, right or wrong, may soon pass. All are problems about which decisions must be made. The enduring and lasting decisions require great management skill. Attention to management development as day-to-day problems are attacked can improve that skill.

Management needs are growing and becoming more unique. Management requires thought and judg-

ment and the process has not been mechanized. It is a continuous process involving every family member. Good management can contribute to family success. With all members contributing to decision making, a family can develop a unity of purpose and a management plan for achieving mutually satisfying goals.

## A CHALLENGE

*(Continued from page 57)*

agreements, and planning for future education. Every county has found intense interest and need for an active program on career exploration.

As a result of the program, several father and son agreements have been written. Many have been helped to make decisions about careers, especially on whether to farm or not to farm.

One county reported five boys buying farms. Another county developed a comprehensive program on money management in which parents as well as youth became interested.

All the counties have recognized the challenge and potential in applying the farm and home management program to older farm youth. Statewide, the program is still in an exploratory stage. As more facts are gathered, more light begins to show.

Problems are numerous but progress has been gratifying. The goals are clear and to reach them will mean real service to farm families.

## GOLDEN YEARS

*(Continued from page 65)*

farm family financial planning have been especially productive and rewarding in some States. County extension agents are working with groups of families on such topics as wills, estate planning, Social Security, retirement, insurance, transferring farm ownership, legal problems, partnership arrangements, family corporations, tax management, and savings and investments for farmers. Most of these topics have particular application to older farmers.

Extension can have more effective programs in this field with intensified agent and specialist training, more and better publications on these topics, and close working relationships with the legal profession and Social Security personnel.

## YOUTH WANTS

*(Continued from page 56)*

sonnel or facilities for career counseling. Such a project, however, would aid a youngster to think through what he wanted in life and would suggest sources of more detailed information.

Four southern States are now in the process of developing project outlines for the four areas. Following this, each project will be pretested in at least one State. The Federal Extension Service will develop an evaluation procedure to use in pre-testing.

Through these and other such activities, Extension is making a real start toward the vital job of teaching youth how to equip themselves to meet management needs. Success will depend on our ability to make some shifts in our traditional teaching methods with youth. The need is great. I feel sure we can meet it.

## TRACTION IN TEACHING

*(Continued from page 66)*

stand the management process and are able to determine their own goals, analyze their resources, and make sound decisions. Instead, families can be encouraged to seek current technical information through regularly planned extension activities.

These activities include schools, home demonstration meetings, demonstrations, and tours. However, they are useful only if they have been planned by project and advisory committees and are based on problems common to county families.

Not only does Extension provide information to these families, but uses them as a medium for teaching others. Many family activities serve as result demonstrations for teaching the general public. Such demonstrations are usually enterprises used to implement a management plan. Some examples are kitchen arrangement, beef and dairy feeding set-ups, bunker silos, and farmstead arrangement.

The farm and home approach is one of the best opportunities that Extension has in accomplishing effective management teaching with specific results. It gives us the opportunity to be educators in farm and family living rather than dispensers of information on specific problems.



## DECISIONS UNLIMITED

(Continued from page 51)

duce the combination of profit and non-profit goods (such as leisure) which it desires.

This close relationship is particularly real in farming since the farm and home lie close together physically, and resources for production and consumption frequently come from a common pool.

### Extension's Responsibility

What is Extension's responsibility in this educational area?

Management textbooks say that the capacity to manage is the most fixed of all resources. Extension people as educators find this idea difficult to accept. While we admit that people have a limit on their ability to learn, there is much evidence to indicate that most people can be taught, in some degree, a systematic method and body of principles to guide decision making.

The responsibility of Extension is not to solve people's management problems for them or to determine their ends but to teach the information required for better management and how to apply it to problems. *The objectives of management education are to teach people the process, principles, and subject matter that they need in order to become more capable of coping with their environment, and using their resources in line with the things they want.*

There is evidence to indicate that with such education individuals do attain more of their personal ends. At the same time, society reaps the benefits that arise from more efficient production, marketing, and consumption. Society also receives the intangible but important advantages that result from the improved competence of individuals.

### Major Challenge

Recognizing the increasing need for management in the years ahead, the authors of the Scope Report listed management in the farm and home as an important area of program emphasis. In this regard, the Scope Report reads:

"This premium on management ability is becoming even more obvious

as agriculture grows more complex, specialized, and interdependent with other economic sectors. It is further emphasized by the fact that on our farms, the challenges associated with the efficient management of the farm and home are inseparable. . . .

"Herein lies a major educational challenge to the Extension Service. That is to provide those education experiences for farm families which will enable them better to:

- Appraise their resources.
- Identify problems to be overcome.
- Analyze different ways to meet these problems.
- Weigh alternatives in terms of possible results.
- Understand the technological, credit, and other aids they may use.
- Choose and follow the most promising courses of action. Through these experiences, farm families are able to derive incomes and greater satisfactions from their opportunities."

### The Teaching Job

While this program area emphasizes teaching management per se, it is highly related to work in other program areas. Teaching the management process and its application is a major concern of the entire Extension Service.

The management process and the principles of management form the framework for educational work in all fields where effective use of resources is involved. This body of management information will be frequently taught around problems so that subject matter in other program areas will be taught at the same time. On the other hand, technology of the farm and home can be taught in the management framework directly contributing to management education.

### Teamwork—A Must

The accomplishment of this educational job calls for close teamwork among all extension workers. The achievement of this teamwork becomes progressively more critical as we in Extension are drawn toward more and more specialization. Through teamwork, specialized information can be associated and made problem-solving. Families are always

striving to develop better farms and homes. For maximum effectiveness all extension workers must relate their work to this same end.

### Meeting the Need

The challenge to us as extension workers is to become proficient in this educational area and to incorporate it further into the extension program. Agent reports indicate progress in this area in recent years but more emphasis seems warranted than the 7 percent of all agents' time reported on management work in 1957.

It is highly important that Extension emulate the wise old owl. Through our planning groups we must carefully think through the present place of management education in a modern educational program and develop a program consistent with it.

## Monthly Revisions in Publications Inventory

The following new titles should be added to the Annual Inventory List of USDA Popular Publications. Bulletins that have been replaced should be discarded. *Bulk supplies of publications may be obtained under the procedure set up by your publications distribution officer.*

- F 1263 Breeds of Swine—Reprint
- F 1727 Selecting Hens for Egg Production—Reprint
- F 2003 Legume Inoculation—What It Is, What It Does—Revision 1959
- F 2120 Rice Diseases—Replaces F 1854
- F 2126 The Farm Beef Herd—Replaces F 1592
- F 2128 Hose Pump for Applying Fertilizer Solutions—Replaces F 2096
- F 2132 Improving Your Dairy Herd—Replaces F 1974
- L 154 Production of Parsnips—Reprint
- L 359 Kieffer Pears for Home Use—Slight Revision 1959
- L 364 Chinch Bugs—How to Control Them Revision 1958
- L 441 Cattle Warts—Replaces L 75

The following is discontinued but county offices may use any copies they have on hand. The title should be removed from the inventory list as USDA supply is exhausted.

- F 1017 Cattle Scab and Methods of Control and Eradication—Discontinued



## ***SOME MANAGEMENT NEEDS and HOW TO MEET THEM***

Youth have to make management decisions of basic importance to them and their families. Perhaps the most important is the choice of a career, or how to manage native abilities and talents to produce maximum satisfactions throughout life.

In the early years of marriage, there is greater need for understanding of management than at any other stage in the family life cycle. Young married couples are faced with problems connected with money management, time and energy management, farm and home relationships, and relating values to family needs and goals.

Established farm families face a whole myriad of decisions. With all members contributing to decision making, a family can develop a unity of purpose for achieving mutually satisfying goals.

In teaching management to low-income farmers, we must keep in mind two distinct groups. Health and security are the primary interests of older families. Younger families should clearly see their limited farming opportunities, as well as available alternatives.

Farm families approaching retirement have their share of management decisions related to their age group—transfer of ownership, planning for retirement, estate planning. Although their families are grown, consideration for their children strongly influences most of these decisions.

It is both logical and proper to include youth in farm and home management programs. By studying the facts, many youth have been helped to make decisions about careers, especially on whether to farm or not to farm.

Young men and women in the farming business say they need more help on business analysis, marketing, recordkeeping, and home management. These needs are being met through Farm and Home Development, homemaker schools, young couples schools, and other activities geared to the interests of young adults.

In teaching management to established farm families, we have to consider the various types of operators. Management teaching must be tailored to fit the needs of diverse groups and should be included in all phases of the extension program.

Patience and understanding are the keys to motivating low-income families. Farm and home visits increase the family's confidence in the agent and they gradually develop favorable attitudes and new interests.

Individual contact is the teaching method most likely to succeed with families nearing retirement. Extension workers can help these families evaluate their situations in light of needs and goals.